

UNDERSTANDING 'ME, THE PRODUCT'

GOALS:

- To become aware of our ability to market ourselves.
- To increase use of descriptive words or ways of describing ourselves.

Note: This lesson could be used as an introduction to preparing for telephone scripts and interviews.

RATIONALE:

Most people have difficulty seeing themselves objectively enough to be able to effectively describe their skills and abilities to others. By becoming



familiar with how advertisements work and what they say, participants can learn some techniques that may help them get their message across more effectively.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Flipchart, paper, markers, large size copies of ads from magazines, flyers and newspapers, glued onto bristol board. These should be ads that are mostly word based rather than picture based. Copies of **Advertisement Analysis Worksheet** and **Me, The Product Worksheet** for each participant.

METHOD:

Warm Up: A Favourite Ad

Ask participants to recall a recent advertisement on television, billboard, magazine, or radio that they liked or has caught their attention. Have them share with the group.

Exercise 1: Advertisement Analysis

Using one of the prepared ads as an example, demonstrate the task of analyzing the ad. Ask the group the questions listed on the worksheet. Have the questions written on a flipchart to facilitate easier understanding.

Divide the group into small groups of three. Give each group one of the ads and a copy of **Advertisement Analysis Worksheet** and complete the worksheet.

Have one person from each group present their findings.

Generate some discussion about using relevant vocabulary relating to the needs of the reader and using a positive approach.

Ask one person from each group to present their findings.

Ask the group:

How might this relate to communicating about ourselves?

THEORY: See Theory Box

Exercise 2: Me, the Product #1

Distribute copies of **Me, The Product Worksheet** and ask participants to complete them. Encourage individuals to get feedback and suggestions from other group members.

Distribute ½ size flipchart paper and markers. Divide the group into pairs. Direct participants to exchange their worksheets with their partner. Have each person create an ad for their partner using the information provided on the **Me, The Product Worksheet**, (using the guidelines and points discussed previously in the Theory segment).

Direct participants to create an ad that is interesting, attention getting and suitable to the person it represents. Encourage creativity and having fun. Ads may be humorous, silly, realistic, or artistic, as long as they use the principles discussed in the theory segment.

Options for presenting ads:

- Have each group member read the ad they created to introduce their partner to the group.
- Participants give their partner the ad that they created for them. Encourage those who are willing to share their own ad with the group.

Exercise 3: Me, the Product #2

Distribute another ½ size flipchart paper and ask participants to create a new ad for themselves, using some of the ideas they learned from their partners and the group. Invite each person to present him or herself using their ads.

Questions to Consider:

- What did you enjoy from today's lesson?
- What did you learn that will help you to look for work?
- How might you present yourself differently now than you might have before this lesson?

EVALUATION:

CREDIT: Adapted from material submitted by Deborah Steinberg, St. Stephen's Employment & Training Centre, Toronto

ADVERTISEMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

1. What is it about the ad that mostly draws your attention?
2. What is the message of this ad?
3. What is the product or service presented in your ad?
4. What words get the message across?
5. What are its special features? What makes it similar or different from other products or services like it?
6. How or where could you use this product or service?
7. Are there any other uses for this product than what it is advertised for?
8. What is it about this advertisement that would make someone want to buy it?

URGENT!

Delivery needed

ASAP!

Today!

*Deliver Package
Hurry!*

ME, THE PRODUCT WORKSHEET

Rush

*Send
out!*

*Deliver
TODAY!*

M
S
pack
today!

*Over
Del*

Del
to co
Rush

*Send
as so*
pos

R
Pack
ready
pick-up

*Call for a
pick-up.*

Delivery

Send Today!

*Deliver
tomorrow*

URGENT!

1. What is your name?
2. What type of job are you looking for?
3. What kind of industry do you want to work in?
4. What skills, abilities, education and/or personal strengths are special about you that make you a good candidate for this kind of work?
5. Are there any other jobs you could do with these skills? What other companies or employers could be interested in your background?
6. What is it about you that would make someone want to hire you?

*Need
pick-up*

*Package
is ready*

*Deliver
Needed*

ASA

*Send
mid-to*

*Rush
Deliver*

*pick-up a
soon as
possible*

*Send
package
out!*

MEMO

*Need
package
today!*

THEORY BOX

Advertisers use language and presentation skills to attract customers, just as job seekers need to attract potential employers. The similarities are:

Product = Worker

Advertisement or flyer = Résumé

Sales Pitch = Introduction, Script and Interview

Positively reinforce your attributes.

Just as advertisers use a product's positive attributes so must we communicate our positive attributes to employers.

Use descriptive words related to the job and industry.

Just as advertisers use language that is appropriate to their customers so must we use vocabulary related to the kind of work or type of company we are interested in.

Speak with confidence from a sense of knowing yourself.

Just as advertisers use a confident, outgoing style so must we speak with confidence when telling employers about our ability to make a contribution.

Some tips to help participants see the connection:

It can be very effective to use a negative ad to get the point across. For example: Would you be interested in eating at a place whose advertisements said "When you eat here you may get heartburn, it may cost more than you think and the place is really noisy. Maybe you don't really want to eat here." Of course not!

It's not only how you communicate but also what you communicate that is important. Could you sell a product you know nothing or very little about? This could be done very effectively through demonstration. Bring something that you do not know too much about and see if you can sell it to the class, for example, a new CD. Get their reaction to your sales skills.

Conclusion:

Being aware of your skills and having a positive and appropriate vocabulary to describe them will greatly enhance your ability to get your point across.

This may require further self-analysis and self-awareness. Getting feedback and ideas from group members, friends, instructors and others who know you may help you develop more effective communication skills.